THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ON FIELDWORK AND OTHER OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

POLICY AND GUIDANCE
Statement

This University Policy and associated procedures were approved by the Health and Safety Committee on 7 February 2014 on behalf of the University of Sheffield Council and forms part of the Health and Safety Policy of the University of Sheffield.

The use of this Management Procedure and the incorporation of its requirements into working practices and activities will ensure that the University of Sheffield and its community achieve compliance with its legal duties with regard to health and safety.

Table of significant changes since last review (January 2015):

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>References to fieldwork, Field Trip Leader, Fieldwork Supervisor, and Participant standardised throughout</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.1, 4.2, 4.3</td>
<td>Roles and responsibilities merged and clarified from various sections</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Responsibilities for completing and approving risk assessments clarified. Previous section 5.3 (COSHH Assessments) removed and summary guidance added under Risk Assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Guidance on supervision and relevant ratios updated to reflect 2007 version of UCEA guidance</td>
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<td>8.3</td>
<td>Requirements updated to reflect the University Work Related Driving Policy</td>
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<td>Definition of leisure time clarified</td>
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APPENDIX 3 - FIELDWORK CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL DETAILS

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Summary

This document sets out University policy and procedural guidance for the management of health and safety during all University field trips, fieldwork and other off-campus activities, including general educational visits, undertaken as part of a course of study or research.

It is based primarily upon the University's legislative duties identified from statute and case law, sector best practice and guidance from advisory bodies such as the Health & Safety Executive, Universities UK, DfEE, etc.

The field trip management system follows a step-by-step process covering:

- Legislative requirements;
- Risk assessing fieldwork, including staff/students fitness to work, disabilities, young persons and COSHH assessments;
- Responsibilities of Heads of Department, field trip leaders, supervisors and students;
- Supervision ratios;
- Field trip insurance requirements;
- Training implications and provision of information;
- Various transport issues, notification of routes and schedules;
- Addressing catering/dietary issues;
- Requirements for immunisation and/or vaccinations;
- Procedures regarding provision and use of equipment;
- Development of emergency procedures, first aid, accident reporting, personal safety etc;
- Lone working and non-University staff on field trips;
- Gaining permission from landowners and issues regarding leisure time/activities.

The health and safety of staff and students engaged in fieldwork is paramount and overrides all other considerations, including those which are academic related.
1. Introduction

High standards of health and safety in fieldwork are paramount. They are the result of thorough planning, care and common sense and override all other considerations, including academic.

Definitions of terms used in this document:

- **Field trip** – a University organised visit into the traditional ‘field’ setting for instance open countryside, coastal shorelines, high ground, urban environments etc.
- **Fieldwork** – practical work carried out in the field by staff, students or researchers of the University for the purpose of teaching or research, in environments that are not under the direct managerial control of the University, for instance biological or environmental sampling work, archaeological or forensic digs, street surveys, location filming or video work etc. A single field trip may encompass multiple fieldwork activities.
- **Educational/cultural visit** – University organised trips to, for instance, museums, art galleries, theatres, concert performances, factory/farm tours, etc.

For the interpretation of this Policy, unless otherwise stated, the term ‘fieldwork’ shall cover all of the above headings.

2. Scope

This document sets out University policy and procedural guidance for the management of health and safety during all fieldwork and other off-campus activities, undertaken by staff and students whilst on University business. It is intended to assist departments in complying with both the law and relevant University procedures.

3. Legislative Requirements

The University has a statutory duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students whilst undertaking fieldwork and other off-campus activities. Managers, under the requirements of Regulation 3 of The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, must ensure that all fieldwork (and associated activities) is covered by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and that appropriate control measures have been adopted.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Heads of Department

The overall responsibility for the safety of fieldwork is carried by Heads of Department. Whilst Heads of Department remain accountable for the authorisation of all fieldwork activities, they should set out local procedures and expectations for the arranging and approval of all fieldwork within their Department. They must ensure that any person who is to lead or supervise fieldwork activities:

- is made fully aware of their duties under this Policy (see Section 4.2);
- is trained in the appropriate techniques and procedures to be used;
- understands the potential hazards and risks which might arise;
- is capable of leading the operations in the field;
has, where appropriate, attended a course of training in first aid;
has the ability to ensure that the information regarding risks to health and correct safety
procedures to be followed are cascaded down the line of authority to each individual
fieldwork participant.

4.2 Field Trip Leaders

All fieldwork will be the responsibility of a designated Field Trip Leader, who will have the
following duties: -

• to ensure that the agreed departmental procedures are followed with respect to all
aspects of planning, arranging and authorising any fieldwork.
• to ensure that no fieldwork activity is undertaken which has not been subjected to a
suitable and sufficient risk assessment;
• to ensure that Confidential Personal Details Forms (Appendix 3) are completed by all
students in advance of any residential trip and copied/lodged as required;
• to ensure all fieldwork activities are fully covered by University insurance policies;
• to minimise the impact of the trip activities on the environment for example by ensuring
waste/litter is disposed of correctly and the trip does not cause unnecessary nuisance
(i.e. noise) to local residents;
• to provide a route plan and contact details as required;
• to arrange for appropriate supervision of all activities - for example through the use of
designated Fieldwork Supervisors;
• to ensure Fieldwork Supervisors are made fully aware of their main legal obligations;
• to arrange for mobile phones or other appropriate means of communication, to be
available for staff supervising each separate activity planned as part of the trip;
• to exclude any student from an activity where, in their judgement, the further
participation of that student may harm themselves or endanger other members of the
party;
• to report any accident that occurs, using standard University procedures;
• to ensure any identified disability related adjustments and support during fieldwork is
provided.

4.3 Fieldwork Supervisors

Each activity on a trip (for example, where the party divides to visit different locations) will be
the responsibility of a designated Fieldwork Supervisor who will be an employee of the
University. The Fieldwork Supervisor will have the following delegated responsibilities: -

• to complete a risk assessment for the activity in advance (or to review and follow any
existing risk assessments), and to lodge copies with the Field Trip Leader;
• to provide a route plan and contact details for the particular activity;
• to take a definitive list of those taking part in the activity and lodge this with the Field Trip
Leader before departure;
• to brief all participants on health and safety issues (including risks and control measures)
before any activity commences;
• to carry a mobile phone or other appropriate means of communication at all times;
• to exclude any participant from a given activity where, in their judgement, the further
participation of that individual endangers themselves or other members of the party;
• to report any accident, using standard University procedures;
• to ensure disability related adjustments and support during fieldwork are identified.
4.4 Participants

All participants taking part in fieldwork and other off-campus activities will have the following duties:

- informing the Field Trip Leader of any medical condition, disability or the taking of any prescribed medication which may require reasonable adjustments to be made to ensure that their health is not detrimentally affected by travel, or any particular fieldwork activity;
- complying with the requirements of the Fieldwork Participants’ Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

5. Risk Assessment

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that systems are in place to ensure that all fieldwork activities are subject to suitable and sufficient risk assessment in advance. The responsibility for completing risk assessments lies with the Field Trip Leader, or the Fieldwork Supervisor of a particular activity, as according to departmental arrangements.

Due to the diverse nature of fieldwork, generic risk assessments in most instances are unlikely to be suitable, other than for low risk urban events in the UK. For higher risk activities or locations, a specific risk assessment(s) for each trip or activity should be produced.

In some instances, where activities have been arranged through, or are to be delivered by a third party (for instance guided tours through industrial/rural sites, provision of adventure/sports activities, boat trips, etc.) copies should be sought of the third party’s risk assessment, evidence of competency and Public Liability insurance cover. This is particularly of relevance for any higher risk activities and this should form an integral part of the overall field trip risk assessment.

For some outdoor fieldwork it may be necessary to consider the season, weather, duration etc. and the issues of heat stroke, heat exhaustion and dehydration or hypothermia may need to addressed within the risk assessment process.

Similarly it is important to be aware of any diseases which may present potential risk to participants’ health and safety during certain aspects of fieldwork, and therefore may need to be considered as part of the risk assessment process; these include (but are not limited to): tetanus, leptospirosis (Weil’s disease), Lyme disease.

All hazardous substances to be used during fieldwork activities must be suitably assessed prior to use. It is the responsibility of the Field Trip Leader/Fieldwork Supervisor to ensure that the appropriate controls identified within the assessment are adhered to at all times during the transport, use and disposal of the substance.

Particular attention must also be paid in the risk assessment process to vulnerable groups such as young persons (i.e. above minimum school leaving age but under the age of 18 years), pregnant and nursing mothers, and those with a disability.

It should be noted that any unplanned activity, which is undertaken during a field trip, for instance a change of activity due to bad weather, must be risk assessed before it commences. This will also include any leisure activities which have been arranged by the University for staff/students.
The significant findings of each risk assessment, together with the preventive or protective measures to be taken must be communicated to all persons who will undertake the fieldtrip work.

In approving any proposed fieldwork, the Head of Department must be satisfied that the Field Trip Leader is competent to lead that particular excursion, is aware of the legal requirements, and that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed.

Further guidance on fieldwork and other off-campus activities risk assessments can be found in Appendix 2.

5.1 Participants’ Ability to Undertake Fieldwork and Other Off-Campus Activities

The University has a duty in relation to the proposed fieldwork to, so far as is reasonably practicable, make an assessment of all participants’ ‘fitness for work’ and general capabilities prior to the fieldwork commencing. Assessment is crucial to ensure:

- that any pre-existing health condition or disability is not worsened by any aspect of the fieldwork;
- that any person with a pre-existing health condition or disability is not disadvantaged or unable to participate in any fieldwork activities wherever reasonable adjustments can be made;
- that all participants have the correct skills and general capabilities for particular fieldwork activities.

To assist in this process a Fieldwork Confidential Personal Details Form (Appendix 3) has been developed for staff and students to complete and return to the Field Trip Leader in advance of any fieldwork commencing. The form contains details of emergency contacts, medical conditions, current medication, etc. and gathering of such information is essential to help inform the risk assessment process.

The Field Trip Leader/Fieldwork Supervisor, as appropriate, should then appraise the form in relation to the proposed fieldwork and other off-campus activities to ascertain if any participants require reasonable adjustments to be made (see Section 5.2 below) and whether this needs to be addressed specifically within the fieldwork risk assessment.

If there is any doubt as to the significance of a particular health condition or disability in relation to the general trip, travel or a specific activity, advice should be sought from the University Health & Safety Team and/or Occupational Health provider.

Any person involved with handling personal information relating to medical conditions or disabilities should ensure that they are familiar with the procedures to be followed relating to disclosure and the keeping of any personal information about staff or students in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Code of Practice.

5.2 Reasonable Adjustments

‘Institutions should ensure that, wherever possible, disabled students have access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad’.  
(QAA, 2000)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SEDA), applies to all the activities institutions undertake wholly or mainly for students, including fieldwork. The University has a legal responsibility towards students to ensure that discrimination does not take place and all reasonable adjustments are made during fieldwork.
Students may feel reticent to reveal a disability for fear of embarrassment or compromising their place on a fieldwork activity and therefore should always be encouraged to discuss any health or other related issues with the Field Trip Leader/Fieldwork Supervisor, particularly if any such issue could potentially affect the health, safety and welfare of themselves or others during the normal course of any fieldwork or associated activities, or in the event of the unexpected occurring.

Students need to be made aware that sometimes adjustments cannot be made without disclosure being given (although the University has a duty to take reasonable steps to encourage students to disclose a disability, students do have the right to confidentiality).

Please Note: Information on any medical condition or disability should only be used to inform the risk assessment process and to determine what reasonable adjustments are required.

Not all information about a student’s medical condition or disability may be relevant to the fieldwork and therefore it should only be passed on on a need-to-know basis in accordance with University Policy. All information must be kept in accordance with the University’s Data Protection Code of Practice.

Four web-based guides have been produced by the HEFCE funded ‘Learning Support for Disabled Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities’ project, these include:

1) [Issues in Providing Learning Support for Disabled Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities.](#)
2) [Providing Learning Support for Students with Mobility Impairments Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities.](#)
3) [Providing Learning Support for Blind or Visually Impaired Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities.](#)
4) [Providing Learning Support for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities.](#)

5.3 Supervision Ratios

Consideration should be given in the risk assessment to appropriate staff/student ratios, which will vary according to:

- the risks associated with the type of activities being carried out;
- the nature of the site/environment being visited;
- whether it is a day trip or residential;
- distance from the University;
- the experience of the group in relation to the activities involved;
- the attitude and maturity of participants;
- types of foreseeable emergencies.

Supervision can be identified as being either direct or indirect:

- Direct supervision is where a member of staff is in charge of the participants at all times and is able to intervene immediately if necessary. This type of supervision would be more appropriate for high risk activities or for less experienced participants.
- Indirect supervision is where a member of staff manages the fieldwork (or any particular associated activity) but would be unable to intervene in person immediately. Examples of where this type of supervision may be the most appropriate may include individual research projects, postgraduate research fieldwork, or where participants work together in group or social activities.
An inexperienced group of first year students will require a higher level of supervision than may be appropriate for postgraduate students. Minimum supervision ratios are not stipulated within law and must be determined through risk assessment. A general suggestion for inexperienced students in low risk activities and environments (e.g. geological or botanical specimen collection, or surveying in reasonably rugged countryside in Summer) might be a minimum ratio of 10:1 (students/staff). Fieldwork supervision however should consider in all cases a minimum of 2 members of staff, in case of incapacity.

For extended residential fieldwork of mixed gender there should where possible be male and female members of supervisory staff. The decision for the presence of both male and female staff members should be at the discretion of the Field Trip Leader.

6. Insurance

All field trip organisers should contact the University Insurance Office to ensure appropriate covers are in place prior to the commencement of their specific trip.

Be aware that exclusions contained in standard household and travel insurance policies may render them unsuitable or inadequate for certain fieldwork activities.

7. Training & Information

Heads of Department should ensure that all persons who lead, supervise or undertake fieldwork are trained in the basic techniques and practices appropriate to the activities to be undertaken, and that they are able to identify and act upon potential hazards and dangers that may arise. Dependent on the type of fieldwork to be undertaken and its location, the following areas of training should be considered: -

- Manual handling;
- Working in confined spaces e.g. trenches
- First Aid;
- Map and compass reading;
- Minibus driving (MIDAS);
- Specialised equipment e.g. climbing equipment;
- Handling and use of hazardous chemicals & emergency spillage response;
- Survival/rescue techniques;
- Impact on the local environment;
- Disability awareness, including making reasonable adjustments.

7.1 Information for Students

It is the responsibility of the Field Trip Leader to ensure detailed advance information is given to all fieldwork participants. Student briefing sessions are recommended before commencement of any fieldwork as a method of communicating the expected standard of conduct and pertinent health and safety information, such as: -

- dates and times of departure/return;
- transport, catering and accommodation arrangements;
- types of activities to be undertaken;
- safety, health, and environmental policies and procedures;
- significant findings of fieldwork risk assessments;
- reasons for completing Confidential Personal Details Form;
• essential safety equipment;
• student responsibilities, code of conduct, leisure time, smoking and alcohol rules;
• first aid information;
• any required or recommended immunisation;
• personal needs list (including clothing, footwear, etc.)

8. Transport

Specific University procedures for hiring University owned vehicles can be found on the University Transport website.

8.1 Private Coach Hire

• Coach hire must only be through University Transport Office;
• Coaches should only be used where seatbelts are available for all passengers and Leaders/Supervisors must ensure these are worn at all appropriate times.

8.2 Private Vehicles

Field Trip Leaders must ensure staff who use their own vehicles for field trips/activities comply with the requirements of the University Work Related Driving Policy and that they are specifically insured for using their vehicle for work-related purposes.

8.3 Hire/University Vehicles (<9 seats)

All University staff are covered under the University's group insurance policy providing the following details are complied with:

• the driver has a valid driving licence, and has not previously been excluded from driving;
• in the event of an accident, EFM Transport Services must be notified immediately and the incident reported via the University online accident and incident reporting system - https://air.shef.ac.uk/;
• vehicles hired on behalf of the University should not be used for personal transport by the individual other than transfer between the University site and home.

8.4 Minibuses – University/Hired

A minibus is defined as a vehicle “constructed or adapted to carry 9 to 16 passengers excluding the driver”. Field Trip Leaders must ensure minibuses are hired and used in accordance with the University Work Related Driving Policy.

8.5 Notification of Routes, Schedules and Attendance

A basic route plan should be drawn up for day trips by vehicle, together with an itinerary, mobile telephone contact details, the date and time of departure, the expected time of return and an attendance list.

In higher risk situations, for example in remote locations, additional details including map grid references may be necessary. This should be prepared by the Field Trip Leader and filed with the Department Office prior to departure.

In addition to the recommendations above, the Field Trip Leader should also provide full contact details of the accommodation for any residential trips.
For vehicle-based visits where more than one vehicle is used, it is essential that attendance lists show which students are travelling in each vehicle, and that the individuals travelling in the vehicles remain consistent with these lists.

9. Immunisation/Vaccination

Immunisation against tetanus is recommended as a minimum for all persons working in rural environments and is particularly important for those performing manual tasks in contact with soil/animals or if the fieldwork could result in exposure to certain pathogenic organisms. The University’s Occupational Health provider can offer advice and provide a vaccination programme for staff.

Such information must be passed on to students so they can make similar immunisation arrangements through their GP.

10. Equipment

All equipment provided by the University for use during fieldwork must be suitable for the conditions and for the activity for which it is to be used and be well maintained by a competent person with appropriate records kept. Equipment must be carefully checked prior to commencement of the field activity and additionally adequate visual safety inspections must be performed before every period of use.

The Field Trip Leader/Fieldwork Supervisor must ensure prior to commencement of any fieldwork activity that participants are given appropriate information concerning any equipment and clothing necessary for health and safety. The choice and use of appropriate equipment is one of the most important aspects of fieldwork safety and consideration should be given to the following:

- equipment must be suitable for the intended use and prevailing conditions;
- equipment must be checked and tested before use and at appropriate predetermined intervals during use;
- programmes of inspections must be drawn up and carried out by ‘competent persons’;
- wherever possible, reduced voltage should be used outdoors with earth leakage/residual current protection where practicable (e.g. 110 volts, battery, RCD);
- for any hired equipment, confirmation must be sought that it meets all appropriate standards, is properly maintained and, where appropriate, instruction in its use given.

10.1 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is defined as ‘all equipment which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects against one or more risks to health or safety’. Waterproof or weatherproof clothing is subject to the Regulations only if its use is necessary to protect employees against adverse climatic conditions that could otherwise adversely affect their health and safety.

The requirement for PPE should be identified as an integral element of the risk assessment process and should include the following considerations:
Example Hazard | Protective Item
---|---
Risk of falling or striking objects | Safety helmets
Using tools, chemicals etc. | Eye/face/hand protection
Noise from machinery etc. | Ear defenders
Dusts, toxic, vapours etc. | Respiratory protection
Sharp objects, chemicals, cold conditions etc. | Hand protection
Risk of foot injury, | Foot protection
Remote areas, traffic etc. | High visibility clothing
Water based activities, drowning | Wet suits and life jackets

Considerations should also be given to informing staff and students of sensible precautions in relation to climate or weather conditions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Condition</th>
<th>Sensible Precaution</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cold/wet conditions</td>
<td>Warm/weatherproof clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat stroke/exhaustion, sunburn</td>
<td>Loose fitting clothing, hats, sun cream (SPF &gt;15)</td>
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Staff and students must be informed of the requirement for protective clothing prior to the commencement of the field trip. It is the responsibility of the Field Trip Leader/Supervisor to ensure that where protective clothing is required it is worn, where the lack of, or refusal to wear, protective clothing endangers the health and safety of that person or anyone else, then that person must be excluded from the field work activity immediately.

11. Emergency Actions

The Field Trip Leader is responsible for developing emergency procedures consistent with the hazards identified, the assessed level of risk and the remoteness of the location identified as a result of the risk assessment process. A coherent plan of action should be drawn up to deal with each situation highlighted and the following points should be actively considered:

- provision of a departmental emergency contact
- provision of appropriate emergency equipment and procedures (e.g. first aid, spill kits, firefighting, decontamination etc.);
- means of summoning aid (e.g. mobile phones, whistles etc.);
- evacuation procedures from premises or residential accommodation;
- liaison with police and other emergency services;
- contingency plans (e.g. plans to withdraw/relocate to a safe place if conditions become dangerous or deteriorate);
- systems for warning others of any dangers.

**It is essential to ensure that all members of the trip are made fully aware of the emergency arrangements.**
11.1 First Aid

If deemed necessary through risk assessment, a first aid kit should be provided commensurate with the size of the group and activities to be undertaken.

It is recommended for fieldwork in remote locations that at least one supervisory member of staff should be ‘First Aid at Work’ trained. Field Trip Leaders should also consider whether specialised training is also required in these situations (such as remote first aid). For low risk short duration urban-based activities, where ambulances and medical aid are readily available, a trained first aider may not be required.

11.2 Accident Reporting

All accidents/incidents of ANY kind while you are at work (including travelling as part of your work activity) MUST be reported on the University’s on-line Accident Incident Reporting system. This can be found at https://air.shef.ac.uk/

Serious incidents or a fatality must also be reported immediately to the Departmental Emergency contact. If the emergency contact is unavailable then notify University 24hr Security Control on (+44) 0114 222 4444.

12. Lone Working

Whenever possible lone working during fieldwork should be avoided, however, it is recognised that in some situations it is not reasonably practicable to avoid this. Particular care should therefore be taken to establish safe procedures with respect to the working environment, with the lone worker involved directly in the risk assessment process.

Only persons authorised by the Field Trip Leader or Fieldwork Supervisor may undertake fieldwork on their own. Where participants will be working unaccompanied or out of sight/earshot, then this must be justified and any additional precautions specified. Clear guidelines for the type of activities that the lone worker may carry out should be given.

The Fieldwork Supervisor is responsible for the lone worker and should know the lone worker’s location and schedule. Effective communication with lone workers is crucial and the use of mobile telephones or other appropriate means of communication should be considered an essential element.

The lone worker must inform their Fieldwork Supervisor of any changes they may wish to make to the programme of work, and any proposed changes must be subjected to further risk assessment before being implemented.

In remote rural environments a first aid kit, watch, map and compass should be carried, as should sufficient water and food unless this is readily obtainable on location. Weather forecasts and, where appropriate, tide level information should be consulted on a regular basis.

Lone workers in urban environments may be at higher risk of violence arising from working in isolated or hostile home environments. A preplanned programme of work, including regular scheduled contact between the department and fieldworker would form a necessary part of any safe system of work.
13. Non-University Staff

The University recognises that non-staff/students are often invited on and participate in fieldwork activities, for example guest speakers, guides etc. The Field Trip Leader/Fieldwork Supervisor must ensure that non-staff are made aware of all relevant University procedures and their responsibilities. The names of non-staff involved in field activities must be included in documentation relating to the activity.

Please note: non-staff involved in field activities owe a duty of care to students and other staff members and must be competent in the activities they are undertaking/leading/supervising.

14. Permission from Landowners and Others

Permission from relevant persons may be required to enter certain areas such as nature reserves, construction sites, reservoirs, landfill sites etc. Wherever possible this should always be sought in advance of the visit commencing. Additionally such areas are likely to have their own local procedures for managing health and safety. These rules must be disseminated to all participants and it must be ensured that they are adhered to at all times.

Areas that require specific permission to be entered should not be entered unless that permission has been granted.

15. Leisure Activities and Leisure Time

Leisure time can be defined as periods where programmed fieldwork activities are not taking place but fieldworkers remain under the general jurisdiction of the University. This might include sightseeing, outings, leisure/sporting pursuits or other social activities, where it is unlikely that fieldwork participants will be directly supervised during such periods.

In general, it should be assumed that only activities that are organised or led by a member of staff should be treated as fieldwork for safety and insurance purposes. However, it should be borne in mind that where a serious injury or fatality occur to a participant during their leisure time, it is unlikely that any distinction would be made by the media and the incident would still be linked to the University of Sheffield in the eyes of the public.

There is considerable potential for accidents to occur during leisure time whilst participants are taking part in fieldwork. Field Trip Leaders must ensure that all those involved in fieldwork are aware of the standard of behaviour expected of them and that they will be seen as representatives of University of Sheffield at all times. This applies to periods of transportation, down time or leisure time as well as during work activity.

All persons involved in fieldwork have a responsibility to ensure that they are not, through the consumption of alcohol or drugs, in such a condition as to endanger their own safety or the safety of others.

Students should be issued with a written code of conduct before the field trip begins, reminding them of their responsibilities to University, staff and fellow students (an example code of conduct can be found in Appendix 1. It is advised that this type of information is carefully explained to students and that a dated signature is received indicating that the student has read and understood the salient points.
16. Personal Safety

Fieldwork can present its own set of personal safety issues, which must be considered as part of the risk assessment process. Participants could find themselves in unfamiliar locations in either remote or urban areas, unaware of local crime rates/incidents (theft, vandalism, violent crime etc.) which may put their personal safety at greater risk than if they were working in areas they are familiar with. This is particularly applicable to lone workers or to those who may be especially vulnerable on account of their age, gender or physical condition.

It is essential therefore that Field Trip Leaders/Fieldwork Supervisors consider carefully potential personal safety issues and put in place appropriate precautions, if required in consultation with relevant persons such as the police, community/social workers etc. Preventative measures could include the following:

- pre-visit appointments and checks;
- no lone working - making visits in pairs or with companion in earshot;
- radios or mobile phones;
- personal alarms;
- monitoring and reporting systems;
- training in interpersonal communication skills;
- a system of regular reporting and communication.

17. Planning Checklist

To help Field Trip Leaders ensure all field trip issues have been covered, a template health and safety checklist can be found in Appendix 4.

18. References/ Useful Contacts


The Field Studies Council (FSC)

Health & Safety Executive

Outward Bound International

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

Issues in Providing Learning Support for Disabled Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities.
Appendix 1: Template Fieldwork Participants’ Code of Conduct

As a member of staff or a student taking part in fieldwork and other off-campus activities you are considered to be representatives of the University of Sheffield and as such are asked to observe sensible standards of behaviour at all times. You should have consideration for others particularly in hotels and other residential accommodation and you must always act in a manner that does not jeopardise either your own, a fellow colleagues or member of the public’s health, safety and welfare.

You are specifically instructed to:

• obey all safety instructions given by Field Trip Leaders and/or Supervisors. Anyone not conforming to the standards required may be dismissed from the field course and or may be subject to disciplinary action;

• stay with the party, except by clear arrangement with the Field Trip Leaders and/or Supervisors. Always assemble where instructed in order to receive specific instructions regarding likely hazards;

• always report any personal injury, illness, near-miss or dangerous occurrence;

• wear suitable clothing and footwear for the type of weather and terrain likely to be encountered and the activity to be undertaken as identified by the Field Trip Leader/ Supervisor;

• wear all personal protective equipment identified by the Field Trip Leader/Supervisor;

• take special care of traffic at all times;

• you are generally encouraged not to smoke unless at rest periods, there is a strict no smoking policy in all University owned or hired vehicles. You must take great care to extinguish discarded cigarette butts;

• do not leave litter;

• do not disturb the environment more than is absolutely necessary;

• do not cause unnecessary nuisance (i.e. noise) to local residents;

• avoid touching any machinery or equipment other than when instructed to do so by the Field Trip Leader/Supervisor;

• working on motorways and railway cuttings is strictly forbidden, unless special permission has been obtained;

• avoid the edges of cliffs, quarries, and other steep or sheer faces, particularly in windy conditions;

• do not climb cliffs, rock faces or crags, unless this has been approved as an essential part of the work;

• you have a responsibility to ensure that you are not, through the consumption of alcohol or a drug, in such a condition as to endanger your own or others safety.

Remember: As part of your Department’s responsibility to ensure safe working practice in the field, Field Trip Leaders have the power to exclude any participant from a given activity/trip where, in their judgement, continued participation may harm themselves or endanger other members of the party.
Appendix 2: Generic fieldwork risk assessment guidance

Example hazards relevant to field trip/work and other off-campus activity:

- Physical hazards - difficulties with the location e.g., cliffs, caves, mines, forests, roadside, extreme weather conditions, tides and currents;
- Biological hazards – venomous, lively or aggressive animals, plants, pathogenic micro-organisms;
- Chemical hazards – pesticides, dusts, chemicals brought onto site i.e., sample reagents, contaminated land;
- Man-made hazards – vehicles, electrical or mechanical equipment, diesel generators, power lines and service pipelines, insecure buildings, slurry and silage pits, military activity, civil disorder;
- Hazards to environment – waste minimisation, disturbance of eco-systems, pollution;
- Personal safety – lone-working, procedures for summoning assistance, etc., risk of attack, routine communication, emergency communication.

Example Hazards/Risks/Control Measures

| Working in an isolated area: | • Leave details of the field site, work schedule and contact detail with colleagues and/or school/service office prior to any trip;  
| Risk – problem in summoning help when in difficulty. | • Specify dates and times of departure and return;  
| | • Where possible carry a radio or mobile phone;  
| | • Avoid lone working. |
| Weather: |
| Risk - variable weather conditions. | • Consult daily weather forecast for the area before setting out;  
| | • Wear clothing suitable for the expected weather conditions, be prepared for sudden changes and where possible take addition clothing;  
| | • Use sun protection cream;  
| | • Drink plenty of fluids (recommended 3 litres per day in hot weather). Alcohol enhances dehydration. |
| Terrain: |
| Risk - slips, trips and falls. | • Wear footwear suitable for the conditions;  
| | • Plan the routes where possible to avoid the most uneven ground;  
| | • Avoid working in poor light conditions. |
| Equipment: Incorrect use/failure of equipment | • Read risk assessment associated with specific equipment;  
| Risk - personal injury, injury to others. | • Seek proper training in use of equipment;  
| | • Inspect equipment carefully before use;  
| | • Do not use equipment if found to be defective or dangerous, report it immediately to Field Trip Leader/Supervisor. |
| Manual Handling: | • Maintain good posture when lifting or lowering equipment; |
| Loading/unloading vehicles, moving/using equipment | • Avoid twisting or bending to reduce the chance of back injury;  
• Wear protective gloves to reduce the risk of damage to hands;  
• Do not single-handedly attempt to lift anything that is “too heavy”;  
• Be aware of awkward shaped loads and unevenly balanced loads;  
• Manual handling training. |
| Field Boundaries - electric and barbed wire fences; hedges | • If working close to fences etc. avoid working with your back to the fence, in case you back into it;  
• Do not climb over fences - use gates or stiles. |
| Lone Working:  
*Risk – difficulty in summoning help when in difficulty;*  
*Risk – attack/abuse.* | • Where possible work, as a minimum, in pairs;  
• Where possible carry a radio or mobile phone;  
• Carry a personal alarm;  
• Instigate a "check-in" system with a colleague or supervisor - Phone in at regular intervals. If you do not phone or return at a certain time arrange for suitable action to be taken;  
• Do not carry valuables or large sums of money unless you need to;  
• Trust your intuition - If you feel scared or uneasy, do not ignore it. |
| Dealing with People:  
Visiting domestic premises  
*Risk – personal attack/abuse.* | • Do not enter the house if the appropriate person is not available;  
• If the person is drunk or aggressive, do not enter;  
• Ensure you can get out quickly if necessary;  
• Where possible work, as a minimum, in pairs;  
• Instigate a "check-in" system with a colleague or supervisor. |
| Accidents:  
*Risk - personal injury.* | • Staff trained in First Aid;  
• Provision of First Aid kit;  
• Be aware of where medical supplies or treatment can be bought or received if there is an accident;  
• Have plans of action and be aware of where help can be sought should an accident occur in a remote location;  
• Remember that it is essential to fill out an accident report and return it to the SHE Section. |
| Getting lost:  
*Risk - personal injury.* | • Study maps of the area before setting out;  
• Plan your route carefully. Ensure you know of a second route should the first be impassable;  
• Ensure you have a means of raising the alarm if you are lost. |
| Working beside major roads:  
*Risk - personal injury* | • Wear brightly coloured, conspicuous hi-viz clothing;  
• Avoid having your back towards the traffic flow. |
| Working with soil: | • Ensure tetanus immunisation is up to date; |
**Risk - agrochemicals, microorganisms, sharp objects etc.**  
Risk of tetanus, cuts and absorption of chemicals.  
- Wear protective gloves;  
- Clean hands frequently, especially before eating, smoking etc.

**Working with Plants:**  
Risk – agrochemicals, microorganisms on plants, plant poisons.  
- Wear protective gloves when handling plant material;  
- Do not eat any plants as they may carry parasites or they may be poisonous;  
- Clean hands frequently, especially before eating - preferably use antiseptic medical wipes.

**Working in / near water:**  
Risk - microbiological infection from water e.g. Weil’s disease, Hepatitis A etc.  
Risk – slips, trips, falls, personal injury.  
- Hepatitis A vaccination is recommended;  
- Ensure waterproof protective gloves are worn;  
- Clean hands frequently, especially before eating - preferably use antiseptic medical wipes.  
- Use a pole to probe ahead to assess the stability of shoreline terrain;  
- Take special care on slippery rocks around lake shores and river banks;  
- Always look ahead at the ground when walking around the water’s edge;  
- When sampling in flowing water environments, be careful of slippery or steep banks and fast currents. If the current is fast or the water looks deeper than knee height, do not enter the water. If you must enter the water, a rope should be tied around your waist and secured to the bank.

**Crop spraying:**  
Risk of poisoning through ingestion and absorption of agrochemicals.  
- Seek information from land owner as to when crop spraying is likely and when entry to field will be safe. Do not enter fields until safe to do so;  
- Avoid pools and puddles which may contain chemicals;  
- Ensure waterproof protective gloves are worn;  
- Clean hands frequently, especially before eating, smoking etc, - preferably use antiseptic medical wipes.

**Allergies:**  
Risk - Allergic reactions causing discomfort, severe cases anaphylactic shock.  
- If aware of an allergy, carry any necessary medication;  
- Be aware that some forms of anti-histamine can cause drowsiness;  
- If affected do not continue with fieldwork.

Remember it is imperative to detail arrangements specific to the fieldwork and other off-campus activities in question that are not covered above. This may include special training requirements, specialist equipment or clothing, or immunisation/vaccination. You must monitor both existing and any new controls you have identified to ensure that they are effective and implemented correctly.
## Appendix 3: Fieldwork Confidential Personal Details Form

### Fieldwork: Confidential Personal Details Form

University policy requires this form to be completed by all staff/students prior to the commencement of the field trip and must be returned to field trip leader/organiser as soon as possible.

- **Field trip/activities:**
  ................................................................................................................................................
  ................................................................................................................................................
  ................................................................................................................................................

- **Date Field trip Commences:** ................................................ **Finishes:** ........................................

- **School:** ................................................................................................................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>First Name</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Your Gender <em>(please circle)</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
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</table>

### Term Time Address:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Post Code</th>
<th>Tel No</th>
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- **Are you currently receiving medical treatment?** YES / NO

- **Do you suffer/or have you had any from of asthma; diabetes; epilepsy; heart disease; nervous or mental illness; rheumatic fever; stroke; tuberculosis?** YES / NO

- **Have you ever had any other form of serious illness or operation?** YES / NO

- **Have you a sight defect?** YES / NO

- **Are you visually impaired/blind?** YES / NO

- **Are you hard of hearing/deaf?** YES / NO

- **Have any of your family a history of heart disease; strokes; diabetes; glaucoma; epilepsy; mental illness; tuberculosis?** YES / NO

- **Have you any infection of your skin, ear, throat, nose or bowel?** YES / NO

If the answer to any of questions “yes”, please give further details information as to the nature of your circumstances. Please include dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name, address and contact of your doctor:</th>
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</table>

Have you had any sickness during the last two years that may affect your or others health and safety whilst on a field trip? YES / NO

If yes, please state nature of illness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name, address and contact of your doctor:</th>
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</table>
Disability

Do you consider yourself to have a disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995? YES/NO

‘a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day duties’.

If yes, please state the nature of your disability

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To protect your health and safety it is imperative that you notify us of any disability or condition that may impact upon health and safety during fieldwork. If you fail to disclose this it may place you at a disadvantage and impact upon your own health and safety. For further information please contact the University’s Disability Advisory Service

Please give details of next of kin or person who can be contacted in an emergency:

Name:............................................................  Relationship:................................................

Address: ........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................................................

Telephone/Text Phone Number:  Home: .................................  Work:..............................................

Mobile:...............................  ......  Text Phone...........................................................

Signed.................................................................  Date....................................................

This form will be used/kept in confidential manner; information will only be used to ensure your health and safety during field trips/work

Thank you for your cooperation
# Appendix 4: Template Fieldwork Health & Safety Checklist

## Fieldwork Health & Safety Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are all Fieldwork Supervisors aware of their responsibilities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are Leaders / Supervisors suitably trained?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have risk assessments been completed for all fieldwork activities?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Confidential Details Forms completed?</td>
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<td>Adequate supervision ratios in place?</td>
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<td>Additional insurance required?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have COSHH / other specific assessments been completed as required?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have suitable transport arrangements been made?</td>
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<td>If University/hire vehicles to be used:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• vehicle/s checked for road worthiness?</td>
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<td>• drivers hours assessed, breaks arranged?</td>
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<td>• Vehicle/s not overloaded?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy of the route to be taken lodged with the departmental office?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copy of schedule of activities/locations lodged with the departmental office?</td>
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<td>Attendance list completed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs of disabled persons adequately catered for?</td>
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<td>Dietary considerations accounted for?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immunisations/vaccinations completed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has equipment been checked? (Use separate equipment checklist if appropriate.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have equipment users been trained in its use?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment been made of PPE requirement, students aware of specific clothing required?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have emergency procedures / contact lists been drawn up?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is there adequate first aid cover available?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are portable first aid kits available and fully stocked?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lone working assessed and control measures put in place?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has permission of landowners/premises been given?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have all students been advised of all fieldwork health and safety requirements and any associated risks?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are all staff/students aware of any personal safety issues associated with the environment they are visiting?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students aware of their personal responsibilities (code of conduct)?</td>
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</table>

**Comments:**

Signed: ..................................................................................................................

Position: ..................................................................................................................

Date: ......................................................................................................................